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Forty-seventh session

ACTION TAKEN ON DECISIONS OF THE
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

This document provides, in summary form, information on the follow-up by UNHCR on all decisions/conclusions of the forty-sixth session of the Executive Committee that called for specific action to be taken by the High Commissioner. The sections and paragraphs referred to below correspond to those contained in the report of the forty-sixth session of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/860). Decisions or conclusions requiring action by Governments or other entities, rather than the High Commissioner, are not reported on. To the maximum extent, Executive Committee and Standing Committee documents have been cross-referenced in order to limit the length of the report.

II. ACTION TAKEN

para. 19: General Conclusion on International Protection

(f) Recalls its conclusion 74 (XLV), which encouraged the High Commissioner to engage in consultations and discussions concerning measures to ensure international protection to all who need it; and reiterates its support for UNHCR's role in exploring the development of guiding principles to this end, consistent with fundamental protection principles reflected in international instruments, and calls on UNHCR to organize informal consultations on this subject;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress Report on Informal Consultations on the Provision of International Protection to all who Need it* (EC/46/SC/CRP.34), presented to the third meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1996).

(g) Calls upon the High Commissioner to support and promote efforts by States towards the development and implementation of criteria and guidelines on responses to persecution specifically aimed at women, by sharing information on States' initiatives to develop such criteria and guidelines, and by monitoring to ensure their fair and consistent application. In accordance with the principle that women's rights are human rights, these guidelines should recognize as refugees women whose claim to refugee status is based upon well-founded fear of persecution for reasons enumerated in the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol, including persecution through sexual violence or other gender-related persecution;

UNHCR action. A UNHCR-organized Symposium on Gender-Based Persecution (Geneva, 22-23 February 1996), attended by 16 Governments, examined, *inter alia*, the content and elaboration of existing guidelines. A report on the symposium will appear in a special issue of the *International Journal of Refugee Law*.

(i) Recognizes that for States to fulfil their humanitarian responsibilities in receiving refugees and in reintegrating returning refugees, and in addressing some of the causes of refugee movements, an effective human rights regime is essential, including institutions which sustain the rule of law, justice and accountability; and in this connection calls on UNHCR to strengthen its activities in support of national legal and judicial capacity-building, where necessary, in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

UNHCR action. See: *UNHCR's role in National Legal and Judicial Capacity-Building* (EC/46/SC/CRP.31), presented to the third meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1996).

(l) Emphasizes in this context the need to address problems pertaining to the return of persons not in need of international protection, and encourages UNHCR to cooperate with other international organizations in looking into ways in which the return process can be facilitated, and to inform the Standing Committee;

UNHCR action. See: *The Return of Persons not in need of International Protection* (EC/46/SC/CRP.36), presented to the third meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1996).

(m) Calls upon the High Commissioner to continue to expand and strengthen the Office's activities with regard to the promotion and dissemination of refugee law and protection principles with the active support of States and through increased cooperation with non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and other relevant organizations; further calls upon the High Commissioner to explore ways to integrate its activities in the areas of documentation, research, publications and electronic dissemination;

UNHCR action. See: *Enhancing UNHCR's Capacity for Strategic Policy Formulation and Dissemination* (EC/46/SC/CRP.49), presented to the fourth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1996).

(n) Recognizes the role refugee community education can play in national reconciliation and encourages UNHCR, in cooperation with other organizations, to strengthen its efforts in assisting host country Governments to ensure the access of refugees to education, including the introduction into such programmes of elements of education for peace and human rights;

UNHCR action. UNHCR finalized in May 1996 a document entitled *The Human Rights Education Programme: A Framework for Curriculum Development*, which outlines the principles behind and guidelines for education on human rights and peace, and an internal UNHCR Working Group will follow-up on this. A conflict-resolution workshop for refugee leaders and NGO workers was held in the United Republic of Tanzania in April 1996, and will be followed up on. A workshop on "Building Teachers' Skills for Peace" is planned for February 1997 in Nairobi, Kenya.

(p) Reiterates the continued importance of resettlement as an instrument of protection and its use as a durable solution to refugee problems in specific circumstances; welcomes the initiative in commissioning an evaluation study and the UNHCR-sponsored consultation on resettlement; and encourages UNHCR to continue the process of dialogue with interested Governments and non-governmental organizations to strengthen its activities in this connection, and to provide regular reports to the Executive Committee;

UNHCR action. See: *Resettlement: An Instrument of Protection and a Durable Solution* (EC/46/SC/CRP.32), presented to the third meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1996).

para. 20: Conclusion on the Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness and the Protection of Stateless Persons

(c) Requests UNHCR actively to promote accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, in view of the limited number of States parties to these instruments, as well as to provide relevant technical and advisory services pertaining to the preparation and implementation of nationality legislation to interested States;

UNHCR action. Technical and advisory services provided by the Office facilitated three accessions to the 1954 Convention and two to the 1961 Convention, and have enhanced the implementation by numerous States of the principles contained in both instruments.

(d) Further requests UNHCR actively to promote the prevention and reduction of statelessness through the dissemination of information, and the training of staff and government officials; and to enhance cooperation with other interested organizations;

UNHCR action. An information and accession package concerning the two statelessness instruments was issued by the Office in June 1996 and distributed to all States that have not yet acceded to one or both Conventions. Cooperation with other interested organizations has included participation in conferences on citizenship hosted by the Council of Europe,

consultations on citizenship with the European Union, and active collaboration on citizenship issues, globally with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, and on a regional basis with the OSCE.

(e) Invites UNHCR to provide it biennially, beginning at the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee, with information on activities undertaken on behalf of stateless persons, particularly with regard to the implementation of international instruments and international principles relating to statelessness, and including the magnitude of the problem of statelessness.

UNHCR action. A report on the subject will be provided in 1997.

para. 21: General Decision on Programme,
Administrative and Financial Matters

(b) Requests the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs currently indicated under 1996 General and Special Programmes which are tentatively estimated at \$ 1.1 billion, and to any other new needs that might arise, bearing in mind the Statute of the Office and the priority to be accorded to statutory activities, and the relevant provisions of the Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds;

UNHCR action. See: *Overall Programme and Funding Projections for 1995 and 1996 (EC/46/SC/CRP.4 and Add.1)*, *Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1996 (EC/46/SC/CRP.18)*, *Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1996 and Tentative Estimates for the 1997 General Programmes Target (EC/46/SC/CRP.30)*, *Overview of UNHCR Activities - 1995-1997 (A/AC.96/865)* and *Update on UNHCR Programme and Funding Projections for 1996 and 1997 (A/AC.96/865, Add.3)*.

(e) Requests UNHCR to allocate the financial and human resources required for the implementation of the recommendations of the Working Group on Refugee Women and Children adopted by the Executive Committee at its forty-fifth session;

UNHCR action. Most of the Group's recommendations on policy development, physical protection, staff development and the mainstreaming of refugee women's concerns have been implemented at the Headquarters level. Four new Senior Regional Advisers for Refugee Women have been appointed (for Africa, the CIS, the Middle East and the Americas) to ensure implementation at the field level. The issues of accountability and mandatory training for UNHCR staff in People-Oriented Planning are under discussion; 50 per cent of professional staff have already received POP training. Concentrated attention is being given to addressing the issue of sexual violence against refugee women and girls, and to implementing relevant sections of the Beijing Platform of Action.

(f) Requests the High Commissioner to keep the Executive Committee regularly informed on developments under both General and Special Programmes, including the uses made, in accord with their established criteria, of the

Emergency Fund, the General Allocation for Voluntary Repatriation (henceforth to be known as the Voluntary Repatriation Fund), and the Programme Reserve, and on progress implementing UNHCR policies under General and Special Programmes;

UNHCR action: See: *Overall Programme and Funding Projections for 1995 and 1996* (EC/46/SC/CRP.4, and Add.1); *Update on Voluntary Repatriation Programmes* (EC/46/SC/CRP.23); *Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1996 and Tentative Estimates for the 1997 General Programmes Target* (EC/46/SC/CRP.30); and the *Overview of UNHCR Activities: 1995-1997* (A/AC.96/865).

(g) Notes the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 1994 (A/AC.96/853), the Report of the ACABQ on UNHCR Activities financed by Voluntary Funds: Report for 1994-1995 and proposed budget for 1996 (A/AC.96/854), the Report of the High Commissioner on the work of UNHCR's Inspection and Evaluation Service (A/AC.96/852), and requests to be kept regularly informed on the measures taken to address the recommendations and the observations raised in these various oversight documents;

UNHCR action: See: *Information Paper: Property* (EC/46/SC/CRP.5); *Background Note on International Procurement* (EC/46/SC/CRP.6); *UNHCR's Evaluation Activities for 1996* (EC/46/SC/CRP.10); *Audit Issues* (EC/46/SC/CRP.13); *Follow-Up to Audit Recommendations: Programme and Financial Management* (EC/46/SC/CRP.20); *Human Resources Management* (EC/46/SC/CRP.46). See also individual oversight paragraphs contained in the updates on regional developments submitted to the various Standing Committees.

(h) Expresses serious concern about the observations of the Board of Auditors in its Report (A/AC.96/853) especially those on management issues, and in particular those relating to continuing problems in regard to the lack of adequate managerial control by UNHCR in regard to programmes implemented by its partners, and asks that the matters raised in the Report be reviewed in a systematic fashion by the Standing Committee;

UNHCR action: See: *Follow-Up to Audit Recommendations: Programme and Financial Management* (EC/46/SC/CRP.20), which deals in particular with the comments of the ACABQ as they pertain to programme management and implementing partners, and *Audit of Implementing Partners* (EC/46/SC/CRP.41), which deals with implementing partner monitoring and audit.

(i) Requests the High Commissioner to initiate a process of informal technical consultations on the question of overhead costs for non-governmental implementing partners, particularly headquarters costs, with a view to having an initial progress review at the time of the first session of the Standing Committee in 1996, and authorizes the Standing Committee, if it sees fit, to decide on this issue in the course of its deliberations during 1996;

UNHCR action: See: Report on Informal Consultations on Overhead Costs of NGO Partners (EC/46/SC/CRP.21). Two decisions were taken by the Standing Committee on this issue.

para. 22: Decision on Budget Structure and Governance

(l) In addition to the broad review of General and Special Programmes at the time of the Executive Committee, inter-sessional meetings shall consider updates on programme needs and funding; at inter-sessional meetings, there shall also be a review of all country programmes (General and Special) in a particular region or regions (e.g. Asia/SWANAME; Europe/Americas; Africa), and of any Special Programmes covering a number of countries in the region(s);

UNHCR action. See the updates on programmes and funding presented regularly to the Standing Committee (EC/46/SC/CRP.4, CRP.18, and CRP.30; and A/AC.96/865/Add.3). Regional country programme reviews presented to the Standing Committee comprise documents EC/46/SC/CRP.11 (Regional Overview), CRP.24 (Europe), CRP.25 (South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East), 35 (Africa), CRP.43 (Americas and the Caribbean) and CRP.44 (Asia and Oceania).

(m) The regular, systematic review of UNHCR programmes at the country level by the Executive Committee at inter-sessional meetings shall be based on agreed documentation (see below), and will include presentations by the senior staff of the Bureau concerned;

UNHCR action. See the Decision on Executive Committee documentation, contained in EC/46/SC/CRP.22 and adopted by the second meeting of the Standing Committee (April 1996).

(n) The uses made of the Emergency Fund, the Programme Reserve and the Voluntary Repatriation Fund shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee at its annual and inter-sessional meetings at the time of each of the programme reviews mentioned in (m) above, to ensure that their use is in accord with the governing criteria;

UNHCR action. See the updates on programmes and funding presented regularly to the Standing Committee (EC/46/SC/CRP.4, CRP.18, and CRP.30; and A/AC.96/865/Add.3).

(o) The wording of the decision related to General and Special Programmes needs and resources adopted at the annual (or any other) session of the Executive Committee shall better reflect the enhanced governance exercised by the Executive Committee over these Programmes;

UNHCR action. See the General Decision on Programme, Administrative and Financial Matters passed by the forty-sixth session of the Executive Committee in October 1995, and the draft General Decision on Programme, Administrative and Financial Matters contained in A/AC.96/865, which is to be presented to the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee for its consideration.

(p) Within the broad framework of oversight of the work of UNHCR, the Executive Committee, in the course of its annual session and at inter-sessional meetings, shall consider, according to an agreed timetable, the various reports on audits, programmes, evaluations, and on the work of the UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Service, as well as UNHCR's response to these reports;

UNHCR action. See: *Information Paper: Property* (EC/46/SC/CRP.5); *Background Note on International Procurement* (EC/46/SC/CRP.6); *UNHCR's Planned Evaluation Activities for 1996* (EC/46/SC/CRP.10); *Audit Issues* (EC/46/SC/CRP.13); *Follow-Up to Audit Recommendations: Programme and Financial Management* (EC/46/SC/CRP.20); *Human Resources Management* (EC/46/SC/CRP.46).

(q) Programme documentation should be so presented that the focus is principally on countries/areas with a clear picture of programmes at the country level;

UNHCR action. See the regional overviews presented to the four meetings of the Standing Committee (EC/46/SC/CRP.11 (Overview), CRP.24 (Europe), CRP.25 (South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East), CRP.35 (Africa), CRP.43 (Americas and the Caribbean) and CRP.44 (Asia and Oceania)), and the *Overview of UNHCR Activities: 1995-1997* (A/AC.96/865), to be presented to the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee.

(r) Programme documentation (covering both General and Special Programmes) for given countries/areas should be concise (not exceeding six pages) and be primarily focused on and offering justification for programmes in a planning year; the current and prior years' activities shall be addressed only to explain any significant variations from estimates and planned activities. Special Programmes covering more than one country will also be presented separately, with corresponding consolidated tables showing estimates and expenditure;

UNHCR action. See 22 (q) above.

(s) The presentation of the annual accounts should be improved; in particular, the number of Special Programmes accounted for individually in the Annex to Statement 2 (which sets out income and expenditure for Special Programmes) shall be expanded to include the most important of those which are currently reported under "Other Trust Funds"; to the extent possible, "Other Trust Funds" should be identified by region;

UNHCR action. See: *Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: Accounts for the year 1995* (A/AC.96/866) (the relevant schedule is now Annex I to Statement 1).

(t) Among the steps to be taken to further enhance UNHCR's budgetary structure and related matters, study and informal consultations will be undertaken in relation to the following:

(i) the further adaptation and improvement of the budget structure as provided for in (b) above;

UNHCR action. This issue will be reviewed in the context of Project Delphi.

(ii) the categories/sectors for reporting on UNHCR's activities, including the possibility of quantifying aspects of UNHCR's protection activities;

UNHCR action. This issue will be reviewed in the context of Project Delphi.

(iii) the presentation of budgets and reporting on programme activities, bearing in mind the need for conciseness and clarity, and the observations of the ACABQ in this regard;

UNHCR action. See 21(b) above.

(iv) review of UNHCR's current computer systems and databases and action to ensure that they are adapted to UNHCR's budgeting and reporting needs;

UNHCR action. See: *Project Delphi: Plan of Action (EC/46/SC/CRP.48, pp. 68-76)*, which details UNHCR's information and communications systems strategy.

(v) ways to ensure better linkages between the presentation of UNHCR's budgets in the United Nations Biennium Budget in support of the Medium Term Plan and the current UNHCR annual budgets presented to the Executive Committee;

UNHCR action. See: *The draft United Nations Medium Term Plan: 1998-2001 - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - Programme 20: Protection and Assistance to Refugees (EC/46/SC/CRP.2/Rev.2)* was presented to the first Standing Committee meeting, in January. It will be seen that the number of programmes was reduced to two. In the preparation of the first biennial budget corresponding to the new Medium-Term Plan, UNHCR will carry further its efforts to synchronize the presentations both to the Executive Committee and under the Regular Budget.

(vi) ways to ensure a better funding base for UNHCR activities;

UNHCR action. In addition to ongoing efforts aimed specifically at a region encompassing several potential new donor countries, UNHCR has undertaken a thorough internal review of the issue of the Office's donor base. The entire question was debated informally with UNHCR's traditional donors in June 1996.

The discussions served to point out areas of potential as well as to discuss realistic strategies. Further discussions with donors on this issue will take place at an upcoming informal meeting during the course of November 1996, at which time a verbal progress report on action taken will be made.

(vii) review UNHCR's Financial Rules, including the provisions governing General and Special Programmes.

UNHCR action. See: *Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds Administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees* (EC/46/SC/CRP.3).

para. 23: Decision on the Strengthening of the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance (ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56)

(b) Decides that the first inter-sessional meeting of the Standing Committee in 1996 should give specific consideration to the resolution and its significance for the work of UNHCR;

UNHCR action: See: *Consideration of ECOSOC resolution 1995/56* (EC/46/SC/CRP.12), presented to the first meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1996).

(c) Requests the High Commissioner to submit to that Standing Committee meeting a proposal as to how the various aspects of the resolution relevant to the work of UNHCR might most effectively be reviewed in the course of the inter-sessional meetings in 1996;

UNHCR action: See: *Consideration of ECOSOC resolution 1995/56* (EC/46/SC/CRP.12), presented to the first meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1996), and the programme of work of the Standing Committee presented to the same meeting.

(d) Calls on UNHCR to pursue in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee the issues raised in the resolution;

UNHCR action: The following documents concerning ECOSOC resolution 1995/56 were considered by the Standing Committee: *Consideration of ECOSOC resolution 1995/56* (EC/46/SC/CRP.12); *Operational and Financial Capacity of UNHCR in View of its Mandate and Role: Emergency Response* (EC/46/SC/CRP.7); *Information Note on the Development of Operative Memoranda of Understanding* (EC/46/SC/CRP.8); *Consolidated Appeals* (EC/46/SC/CRP.9); *UNHCR Assistance Activities in Countries of Origin* (EC/46/SC/CRP.16); *UNHCR's Protection Role in Countries of Origin* (EC/46/SC/CRP.17); *UNHCR Activities in Relation to Prevention* (EC/46/SC/CRP.33); and *Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance* (EC/46/SC/CRP.47).

para. 24: Conclusion on Refugee Women

(e) Requests the High Commissioner to prepare a framework for implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action which will form the basis of future UNHCR planning on refugee women's issues as well as reports to the Executive Committee and the Commission on the Status of Women;

UNHCR action. The strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action to which UNHCR brings particular expertise are violence against women (section D), women and armed conflict (section E) and human rights of women (section I). Action aimed at prevention and studying the causes and

consequences of violence will include dissemination, implementation and monitoring of UNHCR guidelines with government and non-government implementing partners; training of refugees in their rights and responsibilities; and a continued focus on gender-based violence as part of regular protection training and reporting. Examples of specific activities include promoting non-violent forms of conflict resolution; promoting and disseminating standards of international humanitarian law and human rights instruments; ensuring the dissemination and implementation of UNHCR guidelines for the protection of refugee women; and promoting gender sensitive approaches in the reintegration of returnees. In terms of human rights, UNHCR will continue to cooperate with relevant United Nations agencies to ensure that the human rights of refugee women, and other women of concern, are addressed in the development and implementation of promotion and dissemination activities, and in staff and refugee training.

(f) Calls on the High Commissioner to report on the delivery of the implementation framework at the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee, with particular emphasis on field implementation of the policy and guidelines, and on UNHCR implementation of the recommendations of the Working Group referred to above.

UNHCR action. This issue will form part of the work programme of the inter-sessional Standing Committee meetings in 1997.

para. 25: Conclusion on Refugees and the Environment

(b) Requests the High Commissioner to revise the interim guidelines to give effect to the reformulated policy;

UNHCR action. The said guidelines were reformulated in June 1996.

(c) Also requests the High Commissioner to promote and enhance coordination and collaboration with host Governments, donors, relevant United Nations organizations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other actors concerned to address refugee related-environmental problems in a more integrated and effective manner;

UNHCR action. In collaboration with IOM and RPG, UNHCR organized an international symposium on refugees and the environment (Chavannes de Bogis, April 1996) and, along with host Governments, NGOs and donors, a workshop on refugees and the environment in Africa (Dar es Salaam, July 1996). UNHCR has also been engaged in extensive consultations, planning and implementation of refugee-related environmental activities with a range of agencies and organizations.

(d) Calls on the High Commissioner to keep the Executive Committee informed through its Standing Committee on the implementation of this policy, in particular of financial implications and environmental actions initiated

in the field, and to present a progress report on the results achieved at that time to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee in 1997.

UNHCR action. A progress report will be presented to the forty-eight session of the Executive Committee.

para. 26: Conclusion on the UNHCR-NGO Partnership in Action Process

(e) Requests the High Commissioner to report to the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee about the progress made on the follow-up to the PARINAC process.

UNHCR action. Issue will form part of the work programme of the inter-sessional Standing Committee meetings in 1997.

para. 27: Conclusion on the Situation of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Africa

(e) Welcomes the strengthening of UNHCR cooperation with the OAU at all levels, and urges the two organizations, with relevant sub-regional bodies, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the international community and the concerned Governments to increase their efforts in working out strategies and implementation of solutions to the root causes of the problems of displacement in Africa;

UNHCR action. Joint action to deal with population displacements in the Great Lakes region included the creation in February 1996 of a steering committee, alternatively chaired by the OAU Secretary-General and the High Commissioner, to deal with follow-up to the Bujumbura Plan of Action. Other areas of contact include meetings on the implementation of the recommendations of the 1994 OAU-UNHCR symposium on refugees and on the development of a new bilateral agreement to update the one signed in 1969, and support for the OAU's efforts to set-up early warning mechanisms.

(g) Calls on UNHCR to intensify its protection activities by, inter alia, supporting African Governments through appropriate training of relevant officers and other capacity-building activities, disseminating information about refugee instruments and principles and providing financial, technical and advisory services to accelerate the enactment/amendment and implementation of legislation relating to refugees;

UNHCR action. In southern Africa, training in refugee law and protection, and status determination, was provided to over 1,100 government officials between 1993 and 1996. In East Africa, government officials were given in-country training while officials from various refugee affairs ministries were sponsored to go to San Remo, Italy, for training in international humanitarian law.

Both South Africa and Namibia acceded to the 1951 Convention, its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention in 1995. UNHCR provided comments on resultant, pending draft national refugee legislation.

(h) Expresses appreciation for the efforts of Governments and for the important work being done by UNHCR, United Nations agencies, the International Organization for Migration, NGOs and other cooperating bodies on the implementation of voluntary repatriation of refugees in Africa; and calls on UNHCR in conjunction with the OAU and concerned Governments, sub-regional groupings and other interested parties, actively to continue to seek sustainable solutions to the refugee problem in Africa, in particular through facilitating voluntary return in a dignified and orderly manner;

UNHCR action. See: Update on Regional Developments in Africa (EC/46/SC/CRP.35) and Update on Voluntary Repatriation Movements (EC/46/SC/CRP.23)

(i) Encourages UNHCR to continue to cooperate with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in emergency humanitarian situations in Africa;

UNHCR action. A Memorandum of Understanding signed with the High Commissioner for Human Rights in April 1996 enhanced earlier agreements between the two organizations, notably the September 1995 note of cooperation, by delineating practical modalities of information sharing.

(j) Calls on UNHCR, in conjunction with host Governments, United Nations agencies, NGOs and the international community, to undertake early assessment of negative impacts of large refugee concentrations on the hosting communities with a view to initiating timely and concrete measures to prevent damage and to assist in its repair, especially damage to the environment and socio-economic systems in host countries, caused by mass refugee influxes;

UNHCR action. UNHCR's Emergency Handbook is being revised to incorporate environmental concerns throughout. Environmental specialists will in future be included in emergency teams dispatched to crises deemed to merit such a team member. Environmental planning is being introduced into several existing programmes to ensure that ongoing damage to a host country's natural resources is minimized.

Both UNHCR and WFP have been placing more emphasis on fuel-conserving measures, such as distribution of fuel-efficient stoves, provision of milled cereals or small milling instruments, and the implementation of food-for-work soil conservation measures, such as tree-planting in Mauritania and Kenya. A proposed \$ 70.5 million short-term assistance package to help repair damage to the environment and infrastructure in the Great Lakes region has met with limited response from the international community.

(k) Expresses concern over the long stay of refugees in certain African countries and calls upon the High Commissioner to keep under review her programmes in those countries, taking into account the increasing requirements in that region.

UNHCR action. See: Update on Regional Developments in Africa (EC/46/SC/CRP.35)

para. 28: Conclusion on the Comprehensive Plan of Action
for Indo-Chinese Refugees (CPA)

(a) Calls on UNHCR to convene a meeting among members of the Steering Committee at the earliest appropriate time, preferably by the end of December 1995, in the region, in order to assess the current situation and to consider necessary measures and durable solutions to ensure successful conclusion of the CPA;

UNHCR action. The seventh and final meeting of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees (Geneva, 5-6 March 1996) agreed that the CPA would formally come to an end as of 30 June 1996.

para. 29: Conclusion on Voluntary Repatriation to Afghanistan

(b) Calls upon the High Commissioner to maintain the activities of her office in Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries still hosting a large number of refugees, and to continue the collaboration of her Office with the Governments concerned, other international humanitarian agencies and NGOs for the provision of assistance to refugee areas in keeping with needs in these countries until such time as the refugees are able to return to their homes in safety and dignity;

UNHCR action. See: *Update on Regional Developments in South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East* (EC/46/SC/CRP.25), presented to the second meeting of the Standing Committee (April 1996).

(c) Requests the High Commissioner to work closely with the Afghan authorities so as to ensure that the basic rights of the returnees and displaced persons are respected and appropriate measures aimed at redressing possible violations are carried out;

UNHCR action. See: *Update on Voluntary repatriation Programmes* (EC/46/SC/CRP.23), presented to the second meeting of the Standing Committee (April 1996). International legal instruments have been translated into a local language and utilized in UNHCR workshops given to government officials on the rights of returnees.

(d) Calls upon the High Commissioner to extend the activities of her Office in Afghanistan to other areas of potential return working in close cooperation with the United Nations agencies through collaborative ventures which will maximize benefits to communities receiving returnees;

UNHCR action. See: *Update on Voluntary repatriation Programmes* (EC/46/SC/CRP.23). An operational presence has been established in 21 provinces for the implementation of programmes by the four sub-offices and their field units.

(i) Urges the High Commissioner to continue to play a supportive and catalytic role to mobilize the involvement of international and multilateral organizations as part of the rehabilitation strategy to sustain repatriation.

UNHCR action. See: *Update on Regional Developments in South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East* (EC/46/SC/CRP.25). The issue was examined in the mid-term review of UNHCR's reintegration programme in Afghanistan.

para. 30: Conclusion on the CIS Conference Process

(g) Requests the High Commissioner to report to the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee about the outcome and follow-up of the Conference.

UNHCR action. See: *Report on the Outcome of and Follow-Up to the CIS Conference* (A/AC.96/867), submitted to the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee.

para. 32: Decision on Executive Committee Working Methods

The Executive Committee,

Recalling decisions taken at its special meeting held on 20 June 1995 (A/AC.96/843), and noting the report of the Working Group on Executive Committee Working Methods (EC/SC.2/76) and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters thereon (EC/1995/SC.2/CRP.30), decides that ... [37 decisions]

[11] The above decisions, will be implemented on an experimental basis for one annual cycle of meetings and their application will be reviewed at the end of the forty-seventh session in October 1996.

UNHCR action. See: *Review of Executive Committee Working Methods* (A/AC.96/868), presented to the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee.

para. 34: Decision on the Programme of Work
of the Standing Committee in 1996

(c) Calls on the Standing Committee to report on its work to the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee.

UNHCR action. See: *Report on the Work of the Standing Committee* (A/AC.96/875), submitted to the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee.